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RESTORATION REVIEW

TO BE DISCOURAGED

No Christian but has his Gethsemane; but every praying Christian will find there is no Gethsemane without its angel.

—Thomas Binney

* * *

It is not until we have passed through the furnace that we are made to know how much dross there is in our composition.

—Charles Caleb Colton

* * *

As in nature, as in art, so in grace; it is rough treatment that gives souls, as well as stones, their lustre. The more the diamond is cut the brighter it sparkles; and in what seems hard dealing, there God has no end in view but to perfect his people.

—Thomas Guthrie

* * *

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Volume 11, No. 6 June, 1969

A Scriptural Call for Renewal . . .

THE WISDOM OF GOD'S ARRANGEMENT

But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single organ, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.— 1 Cor. 12:18-20.

A careful, truth-seeking reading of 1 Corinthians 12 will go far in teaching us the nature of God's community. It shows us that it is both the weak and the strong, the immature and the mature, the less gifted and the highly gifted that make the church what God wants it to be.

Notice the emphasis on the sovreignty of God in the apostle's thought: "God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them as he chose" (verse 18) . . . "God has so adujsted the body, giving greater honor to the inferior part" (verse 24) . . . "God has appointed in the church . . . (verse 28). It is clear that the church is according to God's own arrangement. It is ours to admire its wisdom as well as to enjoy its benefits. Elsewhere the apostle tells us "that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (Eph. 3:10). This is to say that the angels bear witness to God's wisdom as manifested in His plan for man in the church.

This wisdom is especially evident in God's taking account of the psychology of man. Not only are man's spiritual needs cared for in the community of God, but it is intended that he be nurtured in such a way that his own individual differences are recognized. God's arrangement is that each child in His family be cared for in view of his own particular needs. And so the Father deals with each of us separately, providing us with such gifts suitable to our own disposition, though always in keeping with the needs of the whole body of believers.

Paul's logic is persuasive: "If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body." (verses 15-16)

The fact is simple. God has made some of us ears, others of us feet, and still others of us eyes. And some of us are the less comely parts or inferior members. But in His wisdom God bestows more honor upon the inferior parts "that there be no discord in the body." It is all so arranged that each member is well aware of his dependence on all the other members, and so they have the same care for all alike. "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." (verse 26)

It is like the quarterback on a championship football team, who, while he is the focus of most of the attention, realizes that he is merely a part of a well-designed arrangement. It would be folly for him to suppose that he could do anything at all without the proper function of the less prestigious members of the team.

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In football the purpose is to win and it takes "the proper working of each part," just as it does in God's community. But in the church the purpose is greatly different. It is not success as measured by any worldly standard. It is not a job in image building. It is not even a smooth running program that is the objective. It is rather to accomplish what an organism is supposed to accomplish: *the welfare of that organism.* As the apostle puts it: "The holy body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love." (Eph. 4:15) The apostle makes it clear that the function of the body has for its purpose the edification of all the members.

The beauty in all of this, as well as the wisdom, is that God deals with each of us as a loving Father, directing our way in a manner best suited to our individual needs. It is good that we are not all mouth? It is also good that God does not bestow on us those gifts *we* think we should have. It is especially good that God has arranged for us to be different from each other in such a way we can complement each other, thus fulfilling one another's needs.

This should be a source of great comfort to us. Surely we would be on a collision course if it were up to us to direct our own way and determine our own gifts. And yet we so often attempt this very thing. It is folly for us to suppose that God will deal with all his children in the same way, that He will bestow on me the same gift he gives to another. One becomes a free man to the extent that he is willing to accept God's plan for him. He is also free when he allows a brother to be different from himself.

There is wisdom in the dictum that each one must do his own thing, so long of course as this is within the will of God. But we must be mature enough to realize that each one must interpret for himself what God's will is for him. It is this "To each his own" idea that Paul speaks of in Rom. 14:5: "Let every one be fully convinced in his own mind." It is the *own* that should be emphasized: in his *own* mind. In this way Paul spares all of us the rude task of judging our brothers. We don't have to do so, and we should not do so. "Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls." (Rom. 14:4)

Ah, the wisdom in all this. It is the same wisdom that teaches us that one man's food is another man's poison. It would be a tragedy if we were all alike, and it is nearly a tragedy when we endeavor to make ourselves alike. It would not do for all of us to have the same gifts, and we well nigh undo ourselves when we seek for such sameness.

This is why we should not be disturbed if some among us begin to speak in tongues or show other manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit as described in the scriptures. We do not have to belabor the point that

God does not deal with His children in such ways today. It is enough for us to accept the fact that God has not dealt with *us* in such a way. We should recognize that He just might deal with some of His children in such a way. After all, the Bible does say: "To one is given various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues." Why do we trouble ourselves in trying to explain this away. Even if we think we have done this, we are still left with the dear brother who is speaking in tongues!

Let him speak in tongues. Or to use the apostle's language: "Do not forbid speaking in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39) He is not *our* servant. We do not have to give an account for him. It is before his own Master that he stands or falls. If tongues are edifying to him, if they make him more spiritual and fulfill his needs, then let us praise God for it and leave him with his gift, while we go merrily on our way trying to handle English the best we can.

It is a precious truth for us to learn that God deals with His children in different ways, just as earthly fathers do. What God does with one man might be inappropriate for another. It is a wise father that knows his own son.—*the Editor*

LETTER FROM A DISTURBED YOUNG MINISTER

This letter from David Elkins, one of our promising young princes, speaks for itself. In response to my request that his letter be published in this journal, he gave his permission with the unusual provision that my letter to him be published along with it. I did not even have a copy of what I had written to him, so he returned my letter in order that it could accompany his in this issue. Here you have them both.—*The Editor*

May 16, 1969

Dear David:

From some of our mutual friends I had already heard of some of the things that have happened to you, but I am pleased to have this report from you personally.

Let me say *congratulations* and *praise God!* To be so treated by the Establishment is no less an honor than being excluded from the synagogue in the time of our Lord. In that day those that loved the praise of men more that the praise of God managed to get along with the Establishment. The others were kicked out.

We must remember that we cannot be free from the System and at the same time draw our support from it. For that reason you will be wise to prepare yourself to live independent of the powers that be. We may not always prefer making tents, but that is sometimes the price for being free—and it is well worth it, believe me!

A number of fellows like yourself have chosen education and are preparing themselves to teach. This is most compatible with those things we hold dear.

Yet there are some *free* congregations and their tribe is increasing, and they want to know about men like yourself. To such ones I shall be passing along some of the information you have sent me. There may be a place for you with one of them, but again I would urge you to make yourself independent, for one is never really *free* until he is financially divorced from a religious system that tends to enslave.

Your letter is a story that is now being told again and again, as you have noted, but it still needs to be told. It gives others courage.

With your permission I would like to run the letter in *Restoration Review*. We can do this as it is with your name signed. Or we can run it by editing out any references of identification in terms of names and places.

Such stories as these do two important things when read by many. It encourages others to stay with us and work for a change. It encourages others to do as you have done: be strong and free for Jesus' sake.

Sincerely,
LEROY GARRETT

Dear Leroy,

My name is David Elkins. I am a member of the Church of Christ, having been born and raised in one of our hotbeds of orthodoxy—Northeast Arkansas. For as long as I can remember I wanted to be a "gospel preacher." My first talk—"God's Plan versus Man's Plan of Salvation"—was delivered when I was 13.

By the time I was 15 I was speaking at various churches in and around Pocahontas, Arkansas. When I was 16 and a senior in high school, the Church of Christ at Imboden, Arkansas asked me to preach "regularly for them. It was here that I began to build my clergical reputation, which was destined to "sparkle brightly for a moment and then sputter into darkness." God gave me abilities which tended to impress people and furnish construction blocks for the reputation-building I was engaged in. I had a gift of eloquence, which won me a state public speaking championship as well as unabating applause in the pulpit. I was well-grounded in the shibboleths of the Church of Christ and intelligent enough to change the cliches just enough to impress people with my creativity and yet not cause anyone to doubt my "soundness." My reputation as a "young, promising preacher" became great enough that when I graduated from high school, I felt I was quite fully prepared to preach and decided to attend Freed-Hardeman a couple of years only to impress the "degree-conscious" brethren and so that "greater doors of service" would open to me.

By what I consider an act of God's providence, I decided at the last moment to attend Harding College.

God had several men at Harding he wanted me to meet. They were men who didn't have all the "canned" answers I was used to. They were men who led me to search for my own identity and the essence of my relationship to Christ. Gradually, the sectarian "doctrines" which had occupied so prominent a place in my earlier preaching were now fading into relative insignificance and were replaced by sermons on Christ, fellowship, and love. During my four years at Harding the Lord changed me from a convinced Pharasaical sectarian into a disturbed Pharasaical sectarian. During this time I had not forgotten my reputation-building. I managed to become president of the preachers' club at Harding, and my senior year I graduated Cum laude and was selected as the "most outstanding Bible major." This reputation building was soon to be my undoing for it was my reputation which led to my being offered the pulpit of a large northern congregation. In the summer of 1967 I moved to Flint, Michigan and began preaching for the Lennon Road Church of Christ—one of the largest and most progressive congregations in Michigan. Everything went well for several months. Institutionally and statistically speaking, the congregation experienced unexcelled growth. Everyone, and especially my elders, seemed to be pleased with the way things were going.

And then an event occurred which touched off the biggest ecclesiastical mess I have ever seen. The preachers

in the Flint area began a weekly discussion and fellowship period with one another. The chairman encouraged each preacher to speak his opinions freely on the subjects discussed. Naive-like, I thought he really meant it, and in discussing the basis of fellowship I cheerfully set forth my budding belief that we should hold as our brother any baptized believer who is striving to make Christ the Master of his life. To my delight two or three others seemed to hold the same view. To my dismay, however, most did not share my feeling and as time went on, their opposition to the "liberalism" of the rest of us grew into suspicion and cold-shoulderness.

Two of these "liberals" were implicated in some church trouble and all the blame was laid at their feet. As far as I could see, these men were quite blameless in the matter and had simply become the prime suspects in a diligent witch-hunt by the orthodox. Because of my love for these two brethren, I refused to participate in the branding and ostracizing which was gaining momentum in the Flint area. Unfortunately, my elders were carried away by gossip about "dangerous liberalism" and "efforts to unlermine the Lord's church." Because of my continuing fellowship with these "modernists" (who actually believed the Lord's Supper was eaten daily by the Jerusalem Church!), it wasn't long until the witch-hunters came knocking at my door with a warrant to search my theological closets. In a meeting with my elders I explained my belief that there is no scriptural prohibition to eating the Lord's Supper daily. I told them that I personally was opposed to instrumental music in "the worship" but could not conscientiously preach it as a "sin" nor say that people who use it will go to hell. When the meeting was over, I felt I had escaped the "Test for Witches" and that, though we disagreed to some extent, mutual respect for one another's beliefs prevailed.

But, as I was soon to learn, it's not enough to be vindicated from the charge of being a witch yourself, you also must not associate with witches. I continued to count the "witches" in Flint as personal friends and brothers. In a sermon one Sunday morning I pleaded with my people not to participate in the factious, partyistic ostracization which was becoming far too common in our brotherhood. A few, already convinced of the presence of "false prophets" in our area, took this to mean (and rightfully so) that I disagreed with the prevailing opinion that "dangerous, undermining liberals" were at large among us.

As a result, my elders met with me on the following Monday night. We all agreed that it would be better to sever our "working relationship" because of conflicting philosophies. I was told I could stay at Lennon Road for 90 days but by my own choice I decided the following Sunday would be my last. I now feel this may have been a mistake in judgment on my part, and I can feebly excuse my rashness only by stating that for several months I had been in a stifling bishop-dominated prison. Now that freedom was in sight, I could hardly stand the thought of waiting three more months before walking out those doors.

The very next Sunday it was announced that "by mutual consent" I would no longer be the preacher at

Lennon Road. This announcement really was a shock to the people. They wanted to know what was going on. My elders immediately volunteered that I was in "doctrinal error" via a public announcement that Sunday night. Well, now they had said it. Almost without meaning to, my elders had said I, too, was a witch. Now that it had been publicly stated, there was no turning back. I was a witch and like all witches, I had to be burned at the stake. So, sure enough, I was disfellowshiped. To his everlasting credit one elder disagreed with the other elders. He was removed from the eldership and has subsequently also been charged with witchcraft and felt the pains of excommunication by a congregation he has served for 17 years.

Now that the bandwagon was rolling, the Lennon Road eldership seemed to be obliged to serve as drivers. They not only excommunicated me and the elder who disagreed with them; they also disfellowshiped the entire leadership of a congregation in a nearby town who accepted me into their communion. Dean Thoroman, one of the elders at this congregation, is also manager of the "Oak Hills Home for Unwed Mothers" in Detroit. Because this is a Church of Christ sponsored project unbelievable hierarchal pressures have been brought on the home. The Lennon Road elders met with the board of Oak Hills and said they would not support the home with Dean as its manager. This fall he will lose his job, and Oak Hills may very possibly go under. Just what else the Lennon Road elders will do remains to be seen. Perhaps only God and Ira Rice know.

Leroy, I'm sure this is a story you have heard many times. Please forgive the gory details and the traces of overdone negativism. I've written all this with a selfish motive—I want to preach again. Being a "full-time, paid preacher" may not be the best way or perhaps even a good way to serve the Lord, but right now it's the only way I can see to put my abilities to the greatest good. For six months I've been working for General Motors. I have almost no time, it seems, for the things my heart is really full of, such as deeper study, writing, preaching, etc. I often feel depressed and have a great sense of purposelessness.

Though at times I have felt I would never be a "professional preacher" again, I now feel that I must. To avoid becoming overly discouraged and bitter I need to be doing the work I know best how to do for Christ.

If you know of any congregation that would accept me just as I am to work among them, I would consider it a real favor if you would help bring us together.

In His service,

DAVID N. ELKINS
1110 Garland,
Flint, Mich. 48503

My principal method for defeating error and heresy, is, by establishing the truth. One purposes to fill a bushel with tares; but if I can fill it first with wheat, I may defy his attempts.—*John Newton*

As we become a freer and more responsible people the likes of this will be less and less frequent. May God hasten the day! The evil here is not so much that young men are disappointed and their habits of life disrupted or that congregations are disturbed, but that the human spirit's desire to grow and expand is frustrated. The wrong is not that a preacher is needlessly denied employment or that a congregation is bereft of a minister, however annoying these things are. The sin is in obstructing soul-growth, the souls of those within the congregation as well as that of the preacher.

What do such incidents teach the man who wants to get along. He learns not to say what he really thinks. He cannot engage in the free exchange of ideas even with those of his own profession, for one's fellow ministers are not to be trusted. They'll tell on him if he thinks loudly enough to express ideas that are outside the beaten path. He even learns that he cannot afford to stand by a brother that he believes needs his help. He will be declared "guilty by association," a trick used by every witch-hunter, if he shows sympathy and love for the brother who has been black-balled by the gang.

He learns that if he is to get along he must believe or profess to believe this jazz about our infallibility. Brother Elkins' sins were no more serious than suggesting that instrumental music might not be as wrong as we've made it, and that our view of brotherhood should be broad enough to include all baptized believers. For this he has "doctrinal errors" and is fired! And we criticize the pope for his claims of infallibility!

It is not enough for a brother to disbelieve in the organ, for he must believe it is a sin for others. And all of this on a subject not even referred to in the New Covenant scriptures. It is not enough for him to believe that we should be *Christians only,* for he must believe that we are the *only Christians.*

The elders of the Lennon Road congregation are probably fine men with high Christian ideals. It would be repugnant to them to bind children hand and foot and cast them into a dark dungeon, thus impairing their growth and well-being. They would consider such conduct both cruel and criminal, and no doubt they would do most anything to spare a child such misery.

Yet they are doing something far worse than this when they bind and fetter the souls of men. A man may not be hurt badly when his job is taken from him, for he can get another; but irreparable damage may be done deep down inside him when he is persecuted by his own brothers for *thinking.* And so with those is the congregation. How many there might have been who were refreshed in the Spirit by this venture beyond the party lines, only to be disillusioned when this resource of power was snatched from them for the sake of party politics.

Such elders must remember that they are under - shepherds of the great Shepherd of our souls, and to Him they are to give an account for their pastoral responsibilities. The prophet's cry is relevant: "Woe to the shepherds

who feed themselves, but do not feed my sheep."

It is unlikely that in the judgment we will have to give an account for our views on instrumental music or Sunday Schools, *pro* or *con,* but I may have to give an account for the way I treat my brothers in Christ—*all* of them, and especially those who hold views different from my own.

Brother Elkin's letter calls other things to mind. The men God had at Harding who jarred David out of his lethargy may no longer be there, judging by recent events. Some of the most respected professors have either been fired or have resigned due to circumstances similar to what David experienced in Michigan. All this may suggest that we do not deserve anything better. When we drive our best and most enterprising minds from pulpit and classroom, we are saying that we prefer mediocrity to excellence. We are saying that we prefer a party man to a Christ man. We are saying that we don't want to think and that we want no new ideas that will in any way disturb us. Our vote is for sectarianism and obscurantism.

With such choices de we really deserve anything better? We have what we have asked for.

Too, the letter illustrates that our talk about autonomy is but an illusion. Not only do the Lennon Road elders "unchurch" its minister and one of its elders, but it draws the line of fellowship on a sister congregation. Imagine that, one congregation withdrawing fellowship from another congregation! Is it out of order to ask for scriptural precedent for such behavior? We are the first to insist on congregational autonomy, and we pride ourselves in being different from the Methodists and Episcopalians in this respect, but we are the last to practice it.

All that is implied by these events, and much more, is what may be called *the system.* The man who chooses to be free had better think twice before he looks to such a system for his economic well-being. David describes how one makes his way through the system until he "has it made." If you go to the right colleges, take the right courses, learn to excell in the virtues held dear by the party, then *success* is yours. David obeyed all the rules in those early years, and this, coupled with more than ordinary talent, catapulted him to a place in the stars. When he began to think and speak as a free man rather than the party man he was groomed to be, his heavenly status exploded in his face. Once cast out of heaven and uprooted from his place in the stars, he found his existence very earthy and mundane. He now works for General Motors for a living.

The story is similar with all men who have declared themselves free in Christ. Just as man cannot serve both Christ and mammon, he cannot be both free and a party man. Those who serve the flesh will always persecute the sons of the freewoman. It is in this context that the apostle speaks of the inevitability of persecution. It has long been evident that the powers that be within Churches of Christ will persecute any man that questions the system that gives those powers their place in the sun. It is the arrogance of power, whether in politics or religion.

This is why I strongly urge our bright young men with ambitions to change the *status quo* to prepare them-

selves to be financially independent of the system. A man can become a slave not only by being owned by another, but also by being under the economic control of another. Somewhere in the *Federalist Papers* Alexander Hamilton says, "When a man controls the economic life of another, he has a leverage over him." One need not own me if he has power over what I produce. As our young ministers move up through the system and become increasingly dependent upon it for a livelihood it is more and more the case that whatever he is and whatever he produces belongs to the system. The system has the leverage over him. Serious criticism of the system is well nigh impossible.

Economic freedom is basic to all other freedoms. One cannot be free from ignorance without it, nor can he be politically free without it. He certainly cannot be a free man in Christ, one dedicated to the whole of truth wherever he may find it, unless he is economically free.

We are saying that the ugly shadow that falls across this whole story, and all the stories similar to it, is Mammon. The system must have money. It is built on money and thrives on money. Mammon is its god. Mark my word. The system will destroy any man that gets in its way if it can, irrespective of how good a man he may be or how noble his intentions. The system has no interest in either goodness or nobility. Its concern is for mammon and its own preservation. It is the system that crucified Christ, and it stands ready to crucify any man who chooses Christ over the system.

David Elkins is a wonderfully blessed man. He has learned what the majority of men dare not learn, men who love the praise of men more than the praise of God. It is as crucial as anything our Lord ever said.

No man can serve both God and Mammon.—the Editor

Mandate For Renewal: The Declaration and Address . . .

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL AND THE DECLARATION AND ADDRESS

LOUIS COCHRAN

In any discussion of Alexander Campbell we must include his father, Thomas, whose life work formed the basis and supplemented the great accomplishments of his famous son. It is Thomas Campbell's distinction that he made two great fundamental contributions toward the restoration of Christian unity. In the Declaration and Address, he gave to the world a clear statement of the principles upon which unity might be restored; and in his gifted son he furnished the leadership; in other words, the means of implementing those principles. For of all the leaders of the Restoration Movement, only Alexander Campbell possessed the lifelong creative capacity of sustained dynamic devotion; only to him was given the dedicated genius to bring such a movement into being as a valid, growing, healing power is the Church which is the body of our Lord.

Fundamental to any consideration of

Louis Cochran, a Disciple of Christ, lives in Nashville, where he is writing a history of our Movement. He is also the author of several novels, including *The Fool of God*, which tells the story of Alexander Campbell.

thesis is the factor of his complete and utter commitment to the task. For Alexander Campbell was a truly dedicated man. In season and out, like the Apostle Paul, he was a "fool of God" for Christ's sake. In complete candor I must say that it seems to me the loss of that sense of dedication on the part of those of us who follow in his train today, that dedication which counts the world well lost for Christ's sake, is the great loss of our age and of our Brotherhood. If we have not succeeded in materially advancing the cause of Christian unity, it may be well for us to stop tinkering with the machinery and examine our own hearts to find the reason why.

I am convinced it was not by happy accident as much as through the mysterious ways of a Divine Providence that when Alexander Campbell first became acquainted with the Declaration and Address, that immortal Declaration of Independence from spiritual bondage, he found himself well prepared for its favorable reception.

Since childhood he had been aware of his father's distress at the divisions in the Church of Christ; and of his futile personal attempts to heal the breach in his own denomination between the Burghers and the Anti-Burghers of the Seceder Branch of the National Church of Scotland. Due to the wise guidance of Father Thomas he had read while yet in his 'teens' the searching inquisitions into the human mind of the great independent English philosopher, John Locke. No doubt, too, he had been unconsciously influenced by the Huguenot background of his mother, Jane Corneigle, whose ancestors had fled from France to escape this success in implementing his father's religious bigotry and persecution. Equally as important in shaping his thinking had been his year at the University of Glasgow, the Alma Mater of his father. There he had come under the influence of some of the greatest liberal thinkers and preachers in all Scotland, the famous Greville Ewing, who personally befriended him; and the equally famous James and Robert Haldane, who gave of both their wealth and their lives to preach a creedless gospel; and the great Irish preacher, Alexander Carson of Tubbermore, who preached that immersion only was the Scriptural baptism. And it was there, at the last annual communion of the Seceders, that he had rejected the Leaden Token, the symbol of his eligibility to partake of the Lord's Supper, renouncing it, not as a token of communion but as a symbol of separation from other Christians.

Unbeknownst perhaps even to himself, Alexander Campbell had thus already rejected the principal barriers which would separate him from other believers who followed the Savior according to the full measure of their understanding, and was prepared when he landed in New York in September, 1809, and again met his scholarly father, to sympathetically receive the sews that his beloved mentor had also been led of God, through trial and persecution, to the same momentous decision, and in a little attic room supplied by Farmer Nathan Welch had written the Declaration and Address.

We have every reason to believe that during the first strenuous weeks and months of his life in America, Alexander Campbell pondered and prayed over every segment of this 30,000 word

document and we can well imagine his delight in finding in it the solution to the problem of the divided church; a solution toward which he had himself been groping, here plainly stated for all the world to read. The thirteen propositions of the Address, the heart of the document, beginning with the words which have since rung round the world, that "the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one," must have sounded in his ears almost as the words of St. Paul to the Ephesians, written as they were with all "lowliness and meekness, with suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

Dr. Robert Richardson, in his "Memoirs of Alexander Campbell," tells us in classical language that Alexander was "so captivated by its clear, decisive presentations of duty, and the noble Christian enterprise to which it invited, he at once, though unprovided with worldly property and aware that the proposed reformation would, in all probability, provoke the hostility of the religious parties, resolved to consecrate his life to the advocacy of the principles it presented." Soon afterward, when Alexander informed his father that he would not only thereafter devote his life to the cause of Christian unity but had resolved "never to receive any compensation for his labors," Father Thomas warned him that "upon these principles, my dear son, you will wear many a ragged coat." It is interesting to note, as Dr. Richardson pointed out, that "with all his parental partiality, Father Thomas had as yet a very imperfect conception of the indomitable energy and the remarkable ability in the management of affairs" of his son. Which statement, I respectfully submit, may in the light of after events be justly considered as one of the graphic understatements of the century.

Printed copies of the Declaration and Address, posted by Thomas Campbell to every clergyman of every faith in Washington County, Pennsylvania, met with no response whatever. Neither the National nor the Seceder branches of the Presbyterian Church would give serious consideration to such an heritical scheme. And even some of the stalwarts who helped build with their own hands the little log meeting house at Brush Run, eleven miles from Washington, began soon to fade away, among them General Thomas Acheson, a lifelong friend of the Campbell both in Ireland and in America.

In looking back through the avenues of the intervening one hundred and fifty years, who can question the sincerity, or the Christian motives, of the doubters? In discarding creeds and ecclesiastical authority, the Campbells were actually proposing nothing less than a religious revolution, as profound and complete, as devastating in its wreckage of ancient idols as the Reformation of Martin Luther. Truly, in the afterglow, it may be said that the Reformation begun by the great Luther was completed by the Restoration Movement of the Campbells.

Could such a movement result in anything less than anarchy, questioned the established churches? Could the Bible, with the right of private interpretation, actually be made the sole authority in religion? Was it practical? Such a movement had never been attempted before. The creeds were the living witnesses *against* the right of private interpretation. Would it work? To the early fathers of our movement, the issue was more than would these principles work in the lives of men. They were asking: "Can Christianity itself stand with only Christ and the Scriptures?"

Alexander Campbell and Thomas Campbell and James Foster and the James Hanans, and the great ones who came later to join them, the Walter Scotts, the Robert Richardsons, the William Pendletons, the Barton W. Stones, the "Raccoon" John Smiths, and all the rest, studied their Bibles as men have seldom studied before, or since. And they answered with a mighty affirmative, "Yes," which will resound in all parts of the world forever.

It required dedicated men to take this stand and, truly, these were dedicated men.

That unity for which Christ prayed in John 17, that all followers of Jesus might be one even as the Saviour and the Father are one, the union of all Chaistians, which is the cornerstone and the foundation of the Declaration and Address, was, at the beginning, the first order of the new Movement; the supreme and only justification of its existence. But as time went on little by little the mighty forces, the influences, of the established churches, powerfully arrayed against them, made inroads, and for a period it appeared that the emphasis of the Movement might shift from its original plea of Christian Union to that of the restoration of merely the outward trappings of primitive Christianity; and imitation of the pattern of what was conceived to be the New Testament Church. But never at any time did Alexander and Thomas Campbell lose sight of their tremendous vision that Christian unity must be based upon an acceptance of a common faith and not upon a mere physical conformity with what was designated as "the Ancient Order of Things"; and in due course this vision came again into clear focus as the goal of the new Movement.

In the pursuit of this goal, Alexander Campbell kept steadily in the forefront of his thinking the principles enunciated by Father Thomas in the Declaration and Address. Early in his ministry the principle proclaimed in Proposition Three—that nothing ought to be an article of faith, a term of communion, except what is expressly taught by Christ and his Apostles—fastened his attention on a fundamental truth that dramatically altered the course of his religious thinking.

It is May, 1812, and Alexander is talking with his wife, sitting with their first child before the open hearth of the family kitchen in Buffalo, Virginia. We haven't discussed the baby's baptism," she is saying. "What if we should lose her?" Alexander's answer is our first recorded isstance of his personal implementation of his father's tremendous thesis.

"I've been searching the Scriptures, Margaret, for the authority for infant baptism," he speaks the words slowly and with deep emphasis, "and it just isn't there. There isn't any. Infant baptism is without divine authority, and we cannot practice it."

From this position it is but a short step to the further clarification of the method and design of baptism. Devout study of such passages as the Savior's

statement recorded in Mark 16 that "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved," and in Paul's letter to the Romans: "Therefore we are *buried* with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life," — relieved Alexander's mind of any lingering doubt that baptism was not only a Divine command, but was by immersion and for believers only.

And so it was that the little congregation at Brush Run was led into the waters for baptism by immersion; which act in turn led to a tenuous, half-way membership with the Redstone Baptist Association of Cross Creek, Virginia, an uneasy mesalliance which continued for seventeen years. With this momentous decision on baptism, Alexander Campbell ont only took a long forward step in implementing his father's dream by incorporation in the plea for Christian Unity the one universally accepted mode of baptism, but he demonstrated another virtue necessary for any real union, that of a free mind; the ability to renounce error in the light of revealed knowledge, which was with him a life-long characteristic.

In Proposition Four in the Declaration and Address, Thomas Campbell stated: "The New Testament is as perfect a constitution for the worship, discipline and government of the New Testament Church, and as perfect a rule for the particular duties of its members as the Old Testament was for . . . the Old Testament Church."

This passage must have been uppermost in Alexander's mind when he arose to deliver his renowned sermon on "The Law" before the Baptist Redstone Association as Cross Creek, Virginia, in August, 1816. Taking for his text Romans 8:3: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," Alexander Campbell in this sermon first proclaimed to the world the now generally recognized truth, then bitterly opposed by many of the established churches, that Christ came to fulfill, and to supplant, the Jewish law of the Old Testament.

Alexander was only twenty-eight years old when he thus undertook to do for the modern age what the Apostle Paul had done for the churches of the first century in his letters to the Galatians and the Romans: To prove that the Christian Gospel ushered in a new dispensation and was not merely an extension or modification of the old Hebraic law. In so doing he swept aside the theological rubbish of many ages and set firmly in place a great pillar in the platform for Christian Unity. And it was with this sermon, may I add, that the mantle of leadership of the New Movement passed from the aging shoulders of Thomas Campbell to those of his son, to be worn with valor and brilliance and increasing effectiveness for half a century.

It was with this sermon, also, that a significant development was precipitated in the Movement. As its thesis struck a telling blow at the beliefs of many in the Baptist fold, conditions developed which became so uncomfortable that a few years later, in August, 1823, Alexander and his family, with others from the Brush Run Church to the number of thirty-two, withdrew

Jesus. It is to our credit that we stand as a great body of Christians; it is to our shame that we present less than a united front to the world. And because of that, I think Alexander Campbell would say to all factions of our great Brotherhood today: "Physician, heal thyself!"

The heart of the Declaration and Address, the basic premise from which all else evolves, is the first of the thirteen Propositions: "The Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him in all things according to the Scriptures . . . "

In seeking to implement this grand thesis, Alexander wisely and effectively emphasized, not the things that divide us but the things upon which we can agree. Listen to him speaking from the Redstone Association and, organizing a separate congregation at Wellsburg, joined the Mahoning Association of Ohio. With this new affiliation, the efforts of the Campbells to effect the unity of the Church of Christ within the framework of the established church parties came to an end.

Of this move, Alexander Campbell wrote in the Millennial Harbinger in 1834:

> "All the world must see that we have been forced into a separate communion. We were driven out of doors because we preferred the approbation of our Lord to the approbation of any sect in Christiandom. If this be our weakness, we ought not to be despised; if this be our wisdom, we ought not to be condemned."

Seeking the approbation of our Lord, we continue unwillingly, as a separate communion today, championing the cause of unity among all disciples of

through the pages of the Christian Baptist as early as July, 1825.

> "Disunion among Christians is their disgrace and a perpetual reproach and dishonor to the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is asked: Are all Christians to agree in this union? I answer: In all these *fundamental* things they must and do agree. Every Christian has a divine right to admission into the Church of Christ, and to enjoy all the rights and privileges therein, wherever he may be, if he presents himself according to the gospel, unencumbered by sectarian names and creeds."

Listen to him again in that tremendous statement of belief, "The Christian System," when he declares in the preface:

> "The principle which was inscribed upon our banner when we withdraw from the ranks of the sects was Faith in Jesus as the true Messiah and Obedience to Him as our lawgiver and King the *only* test of Christian character, and the *only* bond of Christian union, communion and cooperation, irrespective of all creeds, opinions, commandments and traditions of men."

And again in that great chapter in the same book on "Foundations of Christian Union":

> "But the grandeur, sublimity and beauty of the foundation of hope and of ecclesiastical or social union, established by the author and founder of Christianity, consisted in this: The belief of one fact . . . and the submission to one institution expressive of it . . . The one fact is expressed in a single proposition, that Jesus the Nazarene is the Messiah; the one institution is baptism into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

It was to further implement the plea for Christian Unity that this greatly gifted leader established his two religious periodicals, The Christian Baptist, published from 1823 to 1830, and the Millennial Harbinger, which survived him, both of which achieved worldwide circulation and are yet read and pondered by many thousands of earnest Christians.

It was for the same purpose that, for seven years during his early manhood, he conducted a school for boys, Buffalo Seminary, which he hoped would develop young Timothys of the Faith, and later, at the age of fifty-two, established on his own farm the still unique and justly famous Bethany College, the only institution of higher learning in the world where the Bible was a required textbook, and guided its destinies as President and instructor in the Scriptures until his death.

It was for the purpose of eliminating obsolete words and phrases in the Holy Scriptures which were stumbling-blocks to the proper understanding of the great cause which he espoused, that Alexander Campbell published on his own presses at Bethany a new translation of the New Testament, known as "The Living Oracles," the George Campbell-MacKnight-Doddridge version. It was this version that caused the celebrated John Randolph, during the heat of debate in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829, to charge that: "Alexander Campbell can never be satisfied. Even the sacred Scriptures cannot satisfy him, and he has given us a new Bible of his own!"

Alexander Campbell entered secular politics as a delegate to the Virginia Constitutional Convention for the primary purpose, as he wrote to his colleague, Colonal Charles S. Morgan, of introducing certain badly needed reforms, such as an Amendment for the abolition of slavery; the extension of suffrage; and the popular election of judges. In that assembly he served with such eminent statesmen as Ex-President James Monroe, James Madison, Chief Justice John Marshall, future President Tyler, and John Randolph of Roanoke.

But he also took advantage of the occasion to preach Christian unity according to the Gospel. Almost every night he was in some pulpit, or upon some platform, the quality of his messages being such as to cause James Madison, one of his frequent listeners, to characterize him as "One of the ablest and most original expounders of the Scriptures I have ever heard."

Likewise, in each of his famous debates, Alexander Campbell was prompted principally by the desire to promote the cause of Christian Unity as set forth in the Declaration and Address. In his debate with John Walker and with W. L. McCalla, he emphasized the divisive nature of human creeds as well as the divine nature and universality of Scriptural baptism; and through the printed accounts of the debates, spread widely the plea of the new Movement. His debate with the celebrated British atheist-socialist, Robert Owen, in Cincinnati in 1829, was the result of his acceptance of a challenge by Owen to any clergyman, anywhere, to debate the "Evidence of Christianity." In this encounter, Campbell so effectively appeared as the champion of all Christendom that the Restoration Movement came to the attention of many thousands who otherwise might never have heard of it. And his debate with the Catholic Bishop John B. Purcell in 1837 in the same city, in response to the Bishop's declaration that "The Protestant Reformation has been the cause of all the contention and infidelity in the world," established him as the greatest and most original apologist of Protestant religious thought since the days of Martin Luther. His last debate, and perhaps the most far-reaching in its influence on succeeding generations, was his sixteen-day battle with the celebrated Presbyterian scholar, Dr. Nathan L. Rice, at Lexington, Kentucky, in November, 1843. This debate has been characterized as the most thorough exposure of the fallacy and folly of human creeds ever made, and should be required reading for our brethren today. As Campbell stated on the sixteenth day of this encounter:

> "Our doctrine is catholic, very catholic not Roman Catholic, nor Greek Catholic, but simply catholic. In religion we have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body, one spirit, one hope, and one God and Father. But we have many *opinions*. The church, then, may have opinions by thousands, while her faith is limited to the inspired testimony of the Apostles and the prophets. Where that testimony begins and ends, faith begions and ends. In faith, then, all Christians may be one, though of diverse knowledge and of numerous opinions. In faith we must be one, for there is but one Christian faith; while in opinions we may differ. Hence, we are commanded to receive one another, without regard to differences of opinion.
>
> "It is not the object of our efforts to make men think alike on a thousand themes. Let men think as they please on any matters of human opinion, and upon 'doctrines of religion,' provided only that they hold THE head to be Christ and keep His commandments."

In Proposition Eight of the Declaration and Address, Thomas Campbell emphasized that full knowledge of all revealed truth is not necessary to entitle persons to membership in the church; "Neither should they, for this purpose, be required to make a profession more extensive than their knowledge." And, again, in Proposition Twelve, he stated that all that is needed for the purity and perfection of the church is that it receive those, and only those, who profess faith in Christ and obey Him according to the Scriptures.

It was with these profound truths in mind, I think, that Alexander most effectively implemented his father's thesis. For despite the fact that he is generally regarded as an unemotional and intellectually aloof man, nothing he ever did or said or wrote contributed as much to the healing of wounds caused by the strife of divisions as his attitude of understanding and respect for those who did not see with him eye to eye. At no time during his life-long plea for Christian unity did Alexander Campbell hold that an eventual return to New Testament Christianity be identical in all details with what *he* thought constituted that return. At no time did he allocate all knowledge and wisdom in spiritual matters to himself, and those like him. In nothing he ever said or wrote is this better exemplified than in his noble reply to the lady of Lunenburg, who wrote him asking: "How can anyone become a Christian? Does the name of Christ belong to any but those who believe the Gospel, repent and are buried by baptism into the death of Christ?"

"Who is a Christian?" answered Alexander Campbell. "Everyone who believes in his heart that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the son of God; repents of his sins and obeys Him in all things according to his measure of knowledge of His will. I cannot, therefore, make any one duty the standard of Christian state or character, not even immersion . . . Should I find a Pedobaptist more intelligent in the Christian scriptures, more spiritually-minded and more devoted to the Lord than one immersed on a profession of the ancient faith, I would not hesitate a moment in giving the preference of my heart to him that loveth most. Did I act otherwise I would be a pure

sectarian, a Pharisee among Christians. It is the image of *Christ* the Christian looks for and loves, and this does not consist in being exact in a few items but in general devotion to the whole truth as far as known."

Thus, by precept and example Alexander Campbell throughout his long life faithfully implemented his father's thesis and pointed the way for those of us who follow after him in our quest of the unity of God's people.

Paraphrasing the words of Abraham Lincoln, whose time Campbell shared and whose family was intimately influenced by the Movement he headed: It is for us the living to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which this man has so nobly advanced; that from his dedication we take renewed inspiration to the cause for which he gave the full measure of devotion.

READERS EXCHANGE

Semi-Departure

..... Church of Christ has turned me off. I've joined the University Christian Church and have enjoyed it immensely. The typical C of C does little for me, Central being an exception. I've kept the news of my semi-departure from my parents. I think such a step was the correct one.—*Name and address withheld*

Recently I was sitting with a respected preacher for Churches of Christ, who expressed regret that there was not a place among us for some of the men who have felt called upon to leave us. The list of such men is growing embarrassingly lengthy. We can always say that such ones should stay with us and help correct the deficiencies, and surely that will apply to many who are tempted to leave. But some must leave to find peace. To such ones we must continue to be brotherly, for they are no less brothers than before. If anything, we must love them more. But the brother who wrote the above is not yet gone, for he does find solace in at least one of our congregations. Such congregations are becoming more numerous, and that, by the way, is part of the answer. More *free* churches. Free of the Establishment, I mean.

Gary's Book

I read Gary Freeman's book (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Heaven*). It's a honey. I do not know whether he knew him or not, but he drew an accurate picture of the anti-premillennial preacher that I knew, and whose "fan" I was years ago. He made exactly the same objection to the song, "All Hail the Power," and when he saw the *Word and Work* songbook, he was ready to go war for the anti-premill cause.—*Alabama*

I have ordered a copy of Gary Freeman's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Heaven*. Your review in *Restoration Review* is most interesting. The message which Harper and Row Publishing Company recognizes may be the danger to the health and wellbeing of our country by virtue of our people being enmeshed in the terrible isolation of the Church of Christ which is preserved, protected, guarded and exploited by ecclesiastical demigods.—*Florida*

It will be sometime yet before the verdict can be reached as to the value of Gary's book. That it is a lot of fun is evident enough, and that he knows his people cannot be denied. As to how helpful it will be, well, those who read the book will decide for themselves.

Those Who Partly Agree

I read your paper while at ACC. Although I do not agree with everything in the paper, I do appreciate your spirit and the stimulation your comments provide. —*Texas*

I can't say that I agree with all that you publish, but neither can I say this for any other publication. I do find it refreshing and stimulating to read something beside the party line for a change. I believe you are rendering a great service to "The Church of Christ."—*Florida.*

I really appreciate your efforts to help bring about unity among brothers in Christ. I don't awlays agree with you or other writers in *Restoration Review*, but it is like a breath of fresh air to be able to read the free expression of opinion. It's a shame that this freedom is not more widespread.—*Connecticut*

These are typical of many such letters, and we appreciate them every one. But I am always a bit confused as to why my readers feel constrained to tell me that they do not agree with all that appears in *Restoration Review*. If I practiced this, I would have to preface every subscription I send out with a disclaimer to believing all that appears in said journals. I don't agree with everything in anything I read, not even the Bible, for I take issue with a lot of things in Ecclesiastes and Job, as well as other parts.

There is an interesting psychology in all this. Do you suppose Editor Lemmons down Austin way gets subs to the *Firm Foundation* with such attending statements as, "While I do not agree with all that you publish . . ."? Maybe such statements are made only to maverick editors like me, rebels of sorts. It could be a form of self-justification, as if it might not be quite right to subscribe. So they ease their conscience (or sub-conscience) by telling me that they do not agree with all I write.

So to those who wish to go on record as only partly believing I say God bless you. I am never surprised to learn that someone doesn't agree with all we say. The surprise is, and a blessed one it is, that so many agree with anything at all!

Now why doesn't someone write and tell me he agrees with *all* we have to say. That would be the day. The day for all of us to stop and examine ourselves once more.

But we love everyone of you, our readers, and we only ask that you keep on reading and thinking, writing and criticizing. I assume that there's a lot you'll not agree with. That's why we publish the paper.

BOOK NOTES

One of Carl Ketcherside's better books is *The Royal Priesthood,* which has for years been out of print. It is now re-issued in a new edition, much of it re-written. It is "a plea for the restoration of the priesthood of all believers in the family of God," and begins with the thesis that "Every child of God is a priest!" We will guess that this edition too will be out of print before long. Get your copy now for 3.50.

We are asked sometime to recommend something in philosophy. We suggest a handsome paperback entitled *From Thales to Plato.* The blurb on the jacket is true: "Here is truly a golden book for those eager for the